

IMP·CAESAR
VESPASIANVS
AVG·PONT·MAX·
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CENSOR·COS·VIDESIG·VII
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VESPASIANVS·IMP·VI
PONT·TRIB·POT·IV·CENSOR
COS·IV·DESIG·V
AVCTIS·P·R·FINIBVS

Latin Tears

A course in Latin language

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Pleurs latins

*The book still being updated, any mistakes
occurring here are mine.*

Preface

Anyone who begins reading a book on Latin language may ask: what will I gain if I speak Latin ? It is a good and natural question ! As Latin is considered a dead language now, no longer spoken in our world, except for its use in the Vatican, or its study, somewhat seriously, in a few universities around the world. Then the answer to the question is : the aim of this book here is to help you, not to *speak Latin*, but be able to *read* and *understand* Latin.

The love for what is old belongs to human nature, there is really something obscure that makes a person move by his thoughts to the past. It is a love of what is human. It is the same as the love of antiquities felt by some people. But Latin is not just an antiquity; the beauty of ancient languages like Latin, Ancient Greek, Sanskrit,...takes its force from the veneration of the human past. Like ancient Greek, Latin was the soul of a whole nation that lived in Italy a lot of time ago, and it still carries the culture of that nation, its history, its sorrow, its joy, So the discovery of Latin is the discovery of that Roman nation.

What is interesting more about the nature of the Latin language is that it was the official language of the big Roman Empire for a long time. Latin was linked tightly to the Romans and their civilization as conquerors, and thus it had become during a certain time a *lingua franca* inside the Empire. Afterwards, through its transformations, Latin became the language of education and erudition for the European nations, even 1400 years after the fall of the Empire!

The question: "*Why did Latin extinct?*" is a difficult question to answer that needs a Doctorate dissertation, I cannot give an answer to it. But I think Latin is still worth learning because despite that, even today, Latin remains a jewel; with Latin in hand you can read classical works in all subjects: literature, science, history, religion, philosophy....

That is very true at such an extent that it is important to note that many classical foundational texts in Science have been written in this language :

Liber Abaci of **Fibonacci** (1202) , *Ars Magna* of **Cardano** (1545), *Novum Organum* of Francis **Beacon** (1620), *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* of **Newton**(1687), *Systema Naturae* of Carl **von Linné**(1735) , *Introductio in Analysin Infinitorum* of **Euler**(1748), *Disquisitiones arithmeticae* of **Gauss** (1801), ...

Influence of Latin

Like any human language, Latin had much influences in its environment. With ancient Greek, Latin has been nutritional to all the occidental languages.

a) We know today that more than sixty percent of the words of European languages, either Germanic like English, German,... or Roman like French, Spanish, Italian, ...are of Latin origin. Sometimes Latin words remained intact in a language, as in English

alumni, circa, curriculum, emeritus, interim, locus, per, per se, pro ,syllabus,

In French

es, est, et, qui, si

In Italien

nonna, porta, salve, si

In Spanish

gente, hora, octava, quando, quinta, si

....

b) Furthermore, a lot of words and expressions are alive and used today, this in fact shows that Latin is still at work! as example of these Latin expressions :

id est, et al., grosso modo, nota bene, sic,...

other Latin words are given new meanings

forum, maximum (and its plural : **maxima**),...

c) Latin still gives generously names to the new discoveries in science

virus, quanta, gluon,...

d) A lot of luxury marks in many products are taken from the still venerated old language, a few examples:

–The cars industry “ **Volvo** “ takes its name from the Latin word “ **volvo** “ which means “*I move*”.

–The watch mark “ **Festina** “ from the Latin “ **festina** “ which means “*speedy*”.

–The German car “ **Audi** “ from Latin verb “ **audio** “ means “*I listen*”.

–The car brand “ **Evera** “ , the ending “ **ra** “ from Latin “ **aura** “ that means “*wind*”...

Tips for learners

To learn a language, there are no simple magic things. The problem with most learners is that they have no perseverance, if the learner finds the language difficult he usually stops at the beginning. The person who really learns

seriously is the one who has a consistent aim ahead; he needs the language for his knowledge, for his professional life, a person learning Latin will find big joy in reading a lot of classics... so if you have really Latin language as an aim, then you can learn it. To learn, to read and understand Latin, the first motto is

You will not learn a language in a day or a month or a year,...so patience!

the second motto is

Repeat, repeat,... The more you repeat, the more you learn...

Surely you will not learn a language by reading grammar books!!!you must enter with all your body and mind into the language : reading, listening, speaking,... A grammar book is the last book to look at when learning a language.

Along the lessons, and in order to feel the language, I will retrace the history of Latin and Romans to give the panorama of the life, the people and the anecdotes of those old times. When I began sketching down these lessons, I imagined Latin language as an entity moving all the time around me, let's say a person representing the soul of the Romans, of humans like us with all their good and evil. I listen to him complaining and weeping: how such a big and beautiful language which colored the big Roman civilization is discarded today, and no more spoken in this world, so in this book I am telling the story of Latin Tears...

LESSON 1

We will now have our first touch with Latin by showing to the reader that Latin language is not that monster he imagines! He has only to be patient and learn it step by step.

So we begin by a soft introduction to the language by examining some Latin words: nouns, adjectives and verbs, then we will later put them together to form Latin sentences.

mater	mother
pater	father
puella	girl
bellum	war
fluvius	river
scribere	to write

=====

Grammar and comments

a) In their *natural* forms, Latin nouns are of three genders: masculine, feminine and neuter

Most masculine nouns end in **us** , like

fluvius river

Most feminine nouns end in **a** , like

puella girl

All nouns ending in **um** are neuter, like

bellum war

b) If we look to the adjectives in connection with nouns, we observe that they change with the gender of the noun that they qualify

pulchr<u>a</u>	puella	beautiful girl.
magnum<u>u</u>	bellum	big war.
longus<u>s</u>	fluvius	long river.

And as we shall see later, adjectives change in form according to cases too.

c) In the infinitive form , some Latin verbs have the ending **–ere**:

legere to read

Culture

Latin is an *Indo-European* language that was spoken in a territory called Latium, the nowadays Lazio in Italy. For the origin of the term *Indo-European*, linguistics believe that Latin and many other languages like: Slavic, Gothic, Germanic, Celtic,... have the same ancestor language spoken by people who lived in the actual *Turkey*. This community has then spread in Europe, Central Asia India and, from where the appellation *Indo-European* comes. For example, specialists have remarked that Indo-European languages like Latin, Greek, Persian, Sanskrit, Iranian languages,... do have very similar words like: *mother, father,...* .

Reading

In this section *Reading*, after every lesson and throughout the book, you can read and understand the meaning of the following words put together in sentences without problem, they are in most cases all previously seen words or words explained afterwards. So to do the work well, the reader must stop at each sentence and its composition and try to understand it. Beware! The **c** and **ch** never sound like "sh" in "*chalk, shark...*", but only as "c" in "*car*".

magnus pater. magna mater. pulchra mater. pulchra puella. magnus fluvius. longus fluvius. longum bellum. magnum bellum. magna puella.

New words

bellum(n.) : war.

fluvius(m.) : river.

longus(adj.) : long.

magnus (adj.) : great, big.

mater(f.) : mother.

pater(m.) : father.

puella (f.) : girl.

pulchra (adj.) : beautiful.

scribere (v.) : to write.

legere (v.) : to read.

LESSON 2

In this lesson we introduce our first Latin sentences, they are composed with the main verb "to be", the verb **essere** in Latin:

pater magnus est	the father is big.
mater non est pulchra	the mother is not beautiful.
silva magna est	the forest is big.
puer non est laetus	the boy is not happy.
hortus parvus est	the garden is small.
arbor non est magnus	the tree is not big.
puella fessa est	the girl is tired.

=====

Grammar and comments

a) The conjugation of the verb **essere** in the present tense is

sum I am
es you are
est he, she or it is
sumus we are
estis you are
sunt they are

Latin does not use personal pronouns a lot, we will see them later.

b) We can invert the components of the previous Latin sentences without changing the meanings, for example the sentence

puer parvus est the boy is little

can be either

parvus puer est

or

puer est parvus

and the meaning remains the same. The letter **v** is pronounced like "w" in the English word "*wall*".

c) the negation of a sentence is made by the word **non**:

pater magnus non est the father is not big

and we can change the order as before

magnus non est puer	the boy is not little
non est magna silva	it is not a big forest

d) others Latin verbs end in -are

laborare to work

cenare to dinner

Culture

The Latin language belongs to the italic group, the languages spoken in Italy anciently. These languages are now extinct and only Latin linked to the supremacy of the *Roman Empire* prevailed.

It is believed that Latin alphabet is derived from the Etruscan alphabet or perhaps sometimes from Greek via Phoenician alphabet, it is composed of the letters:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v x y z

The Etruscans were an ancient people who lived in Italy region before the Roman regime.

Reading

pater magnus non est. non est mater pulchra. non est pulchra mater. silva magna non est. fluvius non est parvus. fluvius magnus est. puer parvus non est. non est hortus magnus. arbor magna non est. puella fessa non est. fluvius magnus est. puella magna est. pater fessus est. hortus parvus est. puella pulchra non est. parvus fluvius est . longus fluvius est . lungum bellum non est . parvus fluvius non est. pater laetus est. mater laeta non est. puella laeta est. puer no est laetus.

New words

arbor (f.): tree.

cenare (v.) : to dinner.

essere (v.) : to be.

fessus (adj.): tired.

hortus(m.): garden.

laborare(v.) : to work.

laetus(adj.) : happy.

non : not.

parvus(adj.) : little , small.

puer(m.) : kid, boy ; slave.

silva(f.) : forest.

LESSON 3

We continue to observe other Latin words with some new structures and more explanations, here are some questions in Latin

estne magnus liber?	is it a big book?
estne magnus hortus?	is it a big garden?
estne parva villa?	is it a small house?
estne parva janua?	is it a small door?
estne puer in cubiculo?	is the boy in the room?

And the answers

non est magnus liber	it is not a big book
non est magnus hortus	it is not a big garden
est parva villa	it is a small house.
non est parva janua	it is not a small door.
puer non est in cubiculo	the boy is not in the room.

=====

Comments with grammar

a) To ask questions, we may use the particle **ne** which is called a *question tag*, in the previous examples we put it at the end of "to be"

estne magnus puer?

If we think that the answer is surely "no" , then we use **num** in place of **ne**

num magnus puer est?

and if we think that the answer is surely "yes" , then we use **nonne**

nonne magnus puer est?

b) The meaning of **in** is "inside" or "in":

puer non est in cubiculo the boy is not in the room.

Notice the final "**um**" of "room" disappeared and the letter "**o**" took its place, this because of the declension caused by the preposition "**in**". Latin is an inflected language and the ending of the words change according to their in the sentence. In Latin there are seven cases, and every case has its proper declensions:

Nominative: it is the natural case, the case of the subject : "Sarah reads the book".

Accusative: the subject acts on the object directly without a proposition. "Sarah reads the book".

Dative: in this case, the action is done usually by a proposition: "Sarah gives the book to the boy".

Ablative : when the action is passive and introduced by a proposition as : "the book is read by Sarah "

Genitive: showing propriety presented in English by "of the", like : "the book of Sarah" or "Sarah's book" .

Vocative: this case occurs when one person calls another: "Sarah!". So if the English put "!" after the word, the Romans change the end of the word itself.

Locative: it is the the location case, the place where the action takes place or where a person is: "Sarah is in the house ; at home".

The Latin cases are quite complicated, but we will get to use them naturally.

c) **janua** is the Latin word for "door", and there exist three other words:

porta , ostium, fores

Culture

Latin in Antiquity used only *capital* letters; you can see that in the writings on walls everywhere in Italy or in ancient Latin manuscripts. For example, the name **Auctavius** was written

AUCTAVIUS

Minuscule letters were introduced in the IX AD century by people practicing writing called "*scribes*" or "*copyists*", those men were active in writing all sort of documents either inside the state system or privately. And thus in the subsequent Latin history there have been no capitals even at the beginning of sentences, they were used only for proper words

Julius, Auctavius, Cicerone

However modern Latin is written like European languages, with capitals at the beginning of the sentences and after the full stop. So we have not used capitals so far.

Reading

villane magna est? . estne mater in horto? puellane magna?. hortus non est parvus. estne magnus hortus? janua parva est. estne janua magna . num parvus janua est. janua non est parva. nonne janua longa est. estne puer fessus . parvus janua non est. Num mater in villa est ?non est mater in villa. num pater in cubiculo?

New words

cubiculum (m.) : room.

fores(f.) : door. it's the plural of **foris** , which is also said for "door".

in(prep.) : in, inside.

janua (f.) : door.

liber(m.) : book. The title of **Finobacci** book is: **liber abaci** means *the book of the abacus*.

ne (p.) : a question tag.

nonne (p.) : a question tag.

num (p.) : a question tag.

ostium(n.) : door.

porta(f.) : big door.

villa (f.) : big house ,farm, in the countryside to which the Romans flee to during the season of heat.

LESSON 4

In this lesson we introduce **et**

vir et uxor domi sunt.	The husband and the wife are in the house.
puer et puella in horto sunt.	The boy and the girl are not in the garden.
magnus vir foris est.	a big man is outside.
puella proper magnus arbor est.	the girl is near a big tree.
parvus puer foris est.	a little boy is outside.

=====

Comments with grammar

a) To say "and" we use the word **et**

pater et puella foris sunt *the father and the girl are outside.*

We will see two other words synonym to **et** :

que , ac

in particular, **que** is always at the end of the second word

***puella puerque** the girl and the boy*

b) The word **vir** means *man* and also can mean *husband*, the general word for *human* is **homus**. The word **uxor** (or **mulier**) means *wife*. The word that stands for *woman* is **femina**.

c) **domus** is the Latin word for "house" and "home", and there are also: **insula** which means "house", "building":

***Famillia est in insula** the family is in the house.*

the expression "at home", "in the house" is translated simply by **domi**, without using "**in**", it is the locative case.

Culture

Latin alphabet does not contain the letter

w

It was introduced in the European languages via old German as a fusion of either

u or **v**

So it is **uu** or **vv**. In English **w** is called "*double u*", whereas in French "*double v*".

Latin alphabet also does not contain the two letters

z , y

either, the two letters exist for words of Greek origin as in the proper name

ZONINO

Also the letter **k** exists only in Greek words; in dictionary one finds the words

Kaeso, Kalendae, Kana, Kanus, kanaba, kaput, Karolus(Karlus), Karthago, kasa, Klepsdra(-arius), Koenosis.

However in Latin a lot of Greek words are written with **c-** in place of **k-** .

Reading

puer et puella in horto non sunt. puer et puella foris sunt. puer est parvus et puella est magna. vir et uxor foris sunt. vir et uxor non domi sunt. domi non sunt vir et uxor. non est magna arbor. parva arbor est. Arbor villaque non sunt parvi. sunt magni. mulier non est domi. uxor est foris.

New words

domus(f.) : home, house.

et (conj.) : and.

familia (f.) : family.

foris (adv.): outside.

homus(m.):human.

insula (f.) : isolated houses; building. It can also have the meaning of island.

mulier (f.): wife.

proper (p.): near.

uxor (f.): wife.

vir (m.): man; hero.

Latin words and expressions still in use

- *) **A. D.** : The initials of the expression **annni domini** “years of the Lord”, it means the era after the birth of Jesus , it is also called the Christian era(C.E.).
- *) **ad hoc** : “for that”, said about a thing which is done especially for a certain purpose.
- *) **ad litteram** : “to the letter” , said word by word without changing. See **ad verbum** and **verbatim**.
- *) **ad verbum** : from “**verbum**” means word . something , said word by word without changing. See **verbatim** and **ad litteram**.
- *) **alma mater** : from **alma** "nourishing", and **mater** "mother". It is said about the school , university,... that a person attended in the past.
- *) **alumni** : pupils, plural of **alumnus** : pupil. Used to designate people who studied formerly in an institution : university, ...
- *) **a. m.**: the initials of the expression **ante meridiem** , "before noon", to indicate time. "It is now 3 a.m.". These initials are usually found in electronic watches,...
- *) **bona fede** : as an adj.: real, authentic. As and adv.: Sincerely, with good intention.
- *) **c.** : The initial of "**circa**" that means "about", "around" : "*The prince was born c. 1485*".
- *) **cf.** : from the verb **confer** , found in books, it means “go to” or "to refer to", to look in a reference, as a book,...
- *) **c. v.** : initials of the Latin **curriculum vitea** “course of life” , it is the information about a person (age,...)and his itinerary (education,...), demanded usually by employers,...
- *) **e. g.** : initials of **example gratis** , it means "*for example*".
- *) **emeritus** : From Latin verb **emere**. A title given to a teacher who has retired from a university...
- *) **et al.** : abbreviation of **et alii**, for “*and the other persons*”, used in scientific papers to indicate the main author and the other participants without mentioning them.
- *) **etc.** : abbreviation of **et cetera**, for “*and the other things*”, meaning and so on.
- *) **grosso modo** : in general, without entering in the details.

- *) **honoris causa** : an honorary degree given by an Academy, or a university.
- *) **ibidem** : the same.
- *) **idem** : the same.
- *) **i.e.** : the initials of the expression "**id est**" meaning "that is", "which means".
- *) **infra.** : below, it means see more far below in a book.
- *) **in vitro** : **vitrum** is glass, it means "in laboratory", used in biology, in contrast to "**in vivo**".
- *) **in vivo** : in nature. Used in biology, in contrast to "**in vitro**".
- *) **ipso facto** : "by the fact itself", without adding other considerations.
- *) **lapsus calami** : "slipping of pen", a mistake, done without intention.
- *) **mutatis mutandis** : With the necessary changes; with the change of all what should be changed.
- *) **nota bene** : *note well!*, serves to draw attention to an important thing which may be usually a source of mistake or misunderstanding.
- *) **numerus clausus** : usually the maximum number of members(students,...) in an establishment.
- *) **ob.** : the two first letter of the conjugated verb "**obiit**" which means "he (or she)died". "Shakespeare(*ob.* 1616) said...."
- *) **op.cit.** : the initials of the expression **opus citum** "the work(book) cited" which means "in the same place cited before".
- *) **passim** : pages and the subsequent pages used in books. "Look at page 11 and passim".
- *) **per se** : Without exterior effect, by nature.
- *) **p.m.** : the initials of the expression **post meridiem**, after noon. It is usually found in electronic watches,...
- *) **QED** : the initials of the expression **quod erat demonstratum** for "what would be proved", used in mathematics at the end of a mathematical proof.
- *) **redux** : returns back. "*The hero is redux*" : the hero is returning back, he is back.
- *) **regula falsi** : literally "false ruler". A mathematical method used to find a root of an equation.
- *) **sic.** : the Latin word **sic** means "thus" or "like that". It is used when an author cites an expression from another reference without changing it.
- *) **status quo** : "situation in which", the actual situation and conditions of something: "*the status quo of the economic,*"

- *) **supra** : see the passages before this. It is usually written: **vid. sup.**
- *) **verbatim** : From **verbum** : "a word". It means "exactly", "word by word". See **ad verbum** and **ad litteram**.
- *) **vid. sup.** : from the Latin expression "**vide supra**" means "look at the top", used in books.
- *) **vita** : synonym of **c. v.** : " the student wrote a short vita".
- *) **viz.** : "namely". From **videlicet**, contraction of **videre licet** meaning "it is permitted to see". The origin of the final **z** is perhaps German.